
Appendix 8C

Interpretive Services at Concession Campgrounds

This appendix should be read in conjunction with Chapter 3.

Benefits of Providing Interpretive Services

Interpretive Services enhance a visitor's recreation experiences and appreciation of FS natural and cultural resources. Interpreters educate, entertain, exhibit, inform, and communicate with people by provoking thought. Depending on the FS site, visitors may enjoy guided walks and campground talks, information, exhibits, and programs at visitor centers. Interpretive presentations on subjects such as local history, archaeology, natural and cultural resources, and wildlife management attract visitors to campgrounds and encourage repeat visits. Concessionaires who provide interpretive services may see the economic benefits resulting from satisfied customers.

Determining How Interpretive Services Will be Addressed in the Prospectus

The FS should determine whether providing interpretive services should be included in the prospectus, and, if so, whether interpretive services should be treated as required or optional. If interpretive services will be given significant weight in selecting an applicant, they should be enumerated as a separate evaluation criterion and treated as a required service in the prospectus. For more information on this topic, refer to Chapter 3,

"Considerations for Issuing a Prospectus," "Application Evaluation Plan," "The Evaluation Criteria."

All interpretive programs and materials must reflect a high degree of expertise and professionalism, and the content must be approved by the FS. The FS will provide the site (such as an amphitheater or a nature trail) for interpretive programs. The FS may also make available to the selected applicant interpretive programs and materials pertinent to the concession.

Required Interpretive Services

If interpretive services are required, they should be listed under the "Required Services" section of the proposed AOP provisions in the prospectus. The FS should specify in the prospectus the minimum requirements for interpretive services, including the number and length of programs, days services will be offered, program content, target audience, and required experience for interpretive specialists. Applicants must describe how they will meet the minimum requirements in this section. Applicants may propose services beyond the minimum required level of services.

Optional Interpretive Services

If interpretive services are optional, they should be included in the "Optional Services" section of the proposed AOP provisions in the prospectus. Applicants may describe what services they would propose. If the FS selects an application that includes optional interpretive services, the holder

will be required to provide those services as proposed.

Interpretive / Environmental-Education Services Plan

Applicants should submit an interpretive/environmental-education services plan to describe the programs and services they propose to provide, regardless of whether interpretive services are treated as required or optional services in the prospectus. The plan should describe the following:

- The delivery and frequency of interpretive/environmental-education presentations, and how they will involve the public.
- The development, design, and quantity of brochures that provide information on interpretive subjects, such as the flora, fauna, geology, and history of the area, and nearby attractions that would be of interest to Forest visitors.
- The design-and-development process for self-guided-nature-trail brochures and the development, implementation, and frequency of interpreter-led nature talks.
- Audiovisual equipment to be used, including projectors, sound systems, projection screens, and microphone systems.
- Any additional interpretive/environmental-education services.

Standards for All Interpretive Services

Prospectuses that include interpretive services as either required or optional should specify applicable standards for those services, i.e., applicable Meaningful Measures standards developed for

the interpretive-services program. The evaluation team should use these standards to evaluate an applicant's interpretive/environmental-education services plan and to evaluate provision of interpretive services under the permit in a performance evaluation. (See Chapter 7 for more information on performance evaluations.) Applicable Meaningful Measures standards for interpretive services are listed below.

- Interpretation and education are accurate and based on current scholarship and research data.
- Interpretation and education convey clear messages and are organized around explicitly defined themes.
- Interpretation and education are consistent with the agency's mission and local and national goals for interpretation and education.
- Interpretation and education meet the customer's needs.
- On-site interpretive and educational messages relate to site-specific resources and resource issues.
- Basic information about public-land opportunities is available to all visitors.
- Interpretation and education are accessible (i.e., meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and, as appropriate, accommodate a variety of learning styles and meet the needs of those of diverse cultural backgrounds, non-English speakers, and children).
- Interpretive delivery systems are maintained at a level that meets professional standards for quality and appropriateness. These standards include but are not limited to:
 - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers interpretive-graphics standard for interpretive signs.
 - National Park Service interpretive-competency standards for personal services.

- U.S. Department of Agriculture/FS exhibit design standards.
 - Principles of interpretive communication outlined in Freeman Tilden's *Interpreting Our Heritage*.
 - Costumed-interpretation / living-history standards developed by the National Park Service.
- Appropriate safety measures are taken for visitors participating in interpretive and educational activities.

For more information, refer to "Meaningful Measures Standards," June 7, 1997.

Fees for Interpretive Services

Concessionaires may charge for interpretive programs and materials provided directly by concessionaires. Concessionaires may not charge for interpretive programs or materials that are provided by the FS under a collection agreement with the concessionaire.

Collection Agreements for Interpretive Services

Under limited circumstances, the concessionaire may enter into a collection agreement with the FS whereby the concessionaire pays the FS to provide interpretive services at the concession site. Refer to Chapter 6 on collection agreements for the legal parameters that apply to this type of collection agreement.